

Greetings,

My name is Anthony Bennett. The past 19 years I have served as senior pastor of the Mount Aery Baptist Church in Bridgeport. As one of the largest congregations in Fairfield County, the makeup of our congregation is socially, economically and culturally diverse with a 90-year history of social service and community involvement.

I am also privileged to serve with Father Jim Manship of St. Rose of Lima Church here in New Haven as co-chair of the 27-member institution broad based organization named CONECT.

I am here tonight to join the chorus of voices. Some you have heard and some you will hear in support of SB68 and HB6037. The passage of these bills will ensure that otherwise eligible Connecticut residents will be able to obtain driver's license and registration regardless of citizenship or immigration status. As you have in the literature, the applicants must still prove identity and residency, and pass all the standard tests. I believe the passage of this bill will help all driving residents to feel more secure knowing there is a greater probability that if hit, the driver will have license and insurance. As persons have already stated, this could be mutually beneficial for the state and the insurance industry in terms of additional revenue as well as individual drivers and undocumented immigrants.

I pastor in a community where in addition to our Latino brothers and sisters, there are men and women from other racial and ethnic groups who, through no fault of their own, are undocumented, and yet who also need to make a living like everyone else. I want to urge you to give great consideration to the benefits and understand that its passage would be a tremendous asset to the state of Connecticut.